

Coyotes

Coyotes are found in all areas of Los Angeles County. Contrary to popular belief, these animals do not require open space or “wild areas” to survive. In fact, most coyotes within the urban setting are the offspring of generations of coyotes who lived and flourished in urban areas. Coyotes are active any time of day, but more active from dusk through dawn.

Coyotes are attracted to neighborhoods due to the availability of garbage, pet food and pets which coyotes see as prey. Coyotes will readily eat carrion and plants; however, coyotes are also opportunistic hunters and will prey on small mammals (to include domestic pets), livestock and domestic fowl.

Generally, coyotes are reclusive animals who avoid human contact. Coyotes who’ve adapted to urban and suburban environments may realize there are few real threats and approach people or feel safe visiting yards even when people are present. These coyotes have become habituated (lost their fear of humans), likely due to the availability of food in our neighborhoods. Sometimes, this food is deliberately provided by people who like to watch wild animals or misguidedly feel they are helping them by feeding. These bold coyotes should not be tolerated or enticed in any manner.

“Hazing” is a method that makes use of deterrents to move an animal out of an area or discourage an undesirable behavior or activity. Hazing can help maintain a coyote’s fear of humans and deter them from neighborhood spaces such as backyards and play spaces. The simplest method of hazing a coyote involves being loud and large: Stand tall, wave your arms and yell at the coyote, until it runs away.

City of Torrance Animal Control receives a number of reports of coyote sightings within the city throughout the year. Most of the reports are from citizens who witnessed a coyote or two running in their neighborhood. If Animal Control receives multiple complaints regarding coyotes in a specific area, they will provide extra patrol of the area and pass out literature regarding coyotes.

City of Torrance Animal Control offers the following guidelines to help reduce the risk to your pets:

- The only way to guarantee your pet’s safety is to keep it indoors. Along with the threat from coyotes, outdoor cats are faced with a variety of dangers to include death from cars, diseases, foxes, raccoons, dogs, and birds of prey (such as owls).
- Always supervise your pet outside, especially at dawn and dusk.
- Keep your dog on a short leash.
- If possible, pick up your pet when coyotes are visible.
- Avoid known or potential den sites and thick vegetation.
- Similar to domestic dogs, coyotes will defend their territory and their young.

For additional information on coyotes or to report coyote sightings, please contact the Torrance Animal Control office at 310-618-3850.